

WHY SHOULD I REPORT?

That question is probably asked by a farmer, rancher, or agri-business occasionally when a survey form from the Nebraska Agricultural Statistics Service shows up in their mailbox or they are telephoned. It's a good question; after all, participation in surveys is purely voluntary. The reason so many growers do take part is that they know their involvement is the basis for developing Nebraska and national crop and livestock estimates.

Unbiased indications of acreage, yield, production, cattle on feed, hog breeding plans, dairy and poultry output, and other items go a long way toward helping producers make useful plans.

Crop and livestock estimates are working tools for farmers. They may decide to cut hog production, switch from planting corn to soybeans, hold wheat off the market temporarily, or feed more or fewer cattle. These choices can be made freely, based on how agricultural estimates picture the total situation.

Crop and livestock information also aids farm organizations and legislators in planning programs.

Some farmers are concerned about how the estimates may influence farm prices. Yes, prices may rise or fall slightly after a report. But the true supply entering the market has the long-run impact on the price. Simply omitting official crop and livestock estimates is not going to change the facts.

One reason the program has worked...and worked well for over a century...is that so many recognize the value of the estimates. Some of our respondents have been participating in the surveys for over half of that century. Agribusinesses, also, regularly report on prices, grain stocks, and slaughter.

We guarantee that all answers provided by farmers and others on their questionnaires remain confidential and are used only to form State and National summaries. The personal information goes no further than the office of the Nebraska Agricultural Statistics Service. Questionnaires are destroyed as soon as summarized.

Another point of pride with us is that the estimates are based solely on survey responses, our field visits, and professional appraisal of the situation. There are no outside influences or considerations in developing the information we make public. Also, nobody gets a jump on the estimate--not buyers, not sellers, not USDA officials.

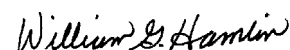
We're the first to admit that our estimates probably don't always go the way you'd like, but we do know and so do you that estimates that accurately reflect the true situation are the only kind that do anybody any good.

Accuracy in our estimates is tied tightly to the degree of response in surveys because each farmer contacted actually represents a large group of similar producers. Consequently, the better the response from farmers, the better details we have for reliable estimates.

Our estimates provide a reliable, unbiased picture of Nebraska's agriculture. The facts on present and prospective supplies furnish a sound foundation for judgment and action by farmers, other businessmen, crop and livestock interests, government agencies, and all associated with agriculture.

If you ever have a need for statistics on agriculture, please feel free to contact our office.

Sincerely,



William G. Hamlin
State Statistician